



# HIV/AIDS & Latinos

 NATIONAL MINORITY AIDS COUNCIL

## HIV and AIDS among Latinos: A Global Pandemic

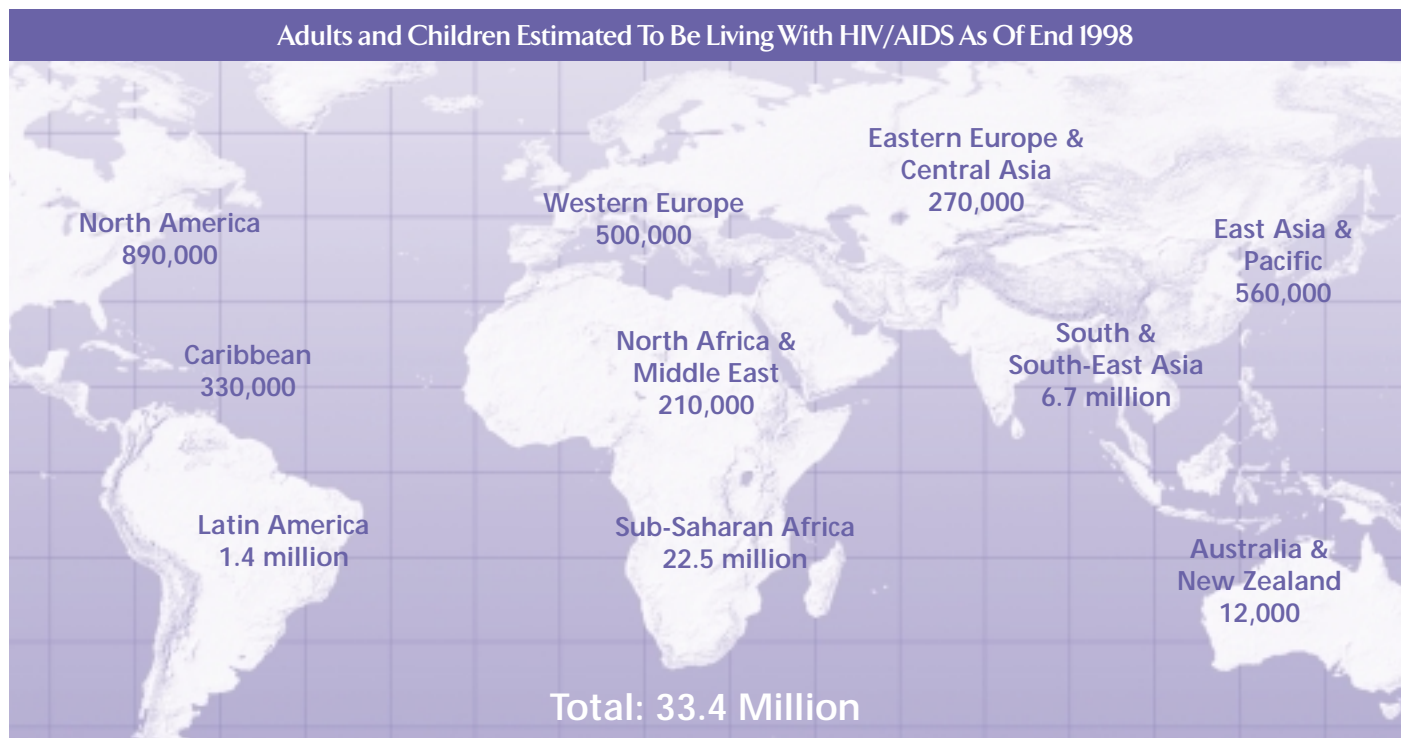
- AIDS is a global pandemic that is impacting the developing world and people of color most dramatically. Worldwide there were 33.4 million persons estimated to be living with HIV/AIDS as of the end of 1998, of which 95% resided in developing countries.
- In 1998, there were 1.4 million adults and children in Latin America living with HIV/AIDS. Men who have sex with men and drug injectors are the groups most heavily impacted. Transmission through sex between men and women is on the rise, particularly in Brazil. HIV infections in Latin America are increasing among women, poor and under-educated population groups, men who have sex with men and people who inject drugs.
- The Caribbean accounted for 330,000 adults and children living with HIV/AIDS in the same year and shows some of the highest rates of HIV in the world outside of Africa.<sup>1</sup>

## Disparities in Health among Ethnic and Racial Minorities Persist

- Despite the fact that the health of the United States population has improved significantly over the last 50 years, ethnic and racial minority groups still continue to lag behind the white population, experiencing substantial disparities in health outcomes on many significant indicators.
- The health disparities experienced by ethnic and racial minority groups are particularly evident in the case of HIV and AIDS in the United States. Ethnic and racial minority groups in the U.S. make up 24% of the U.S. population yet they represent 67% of the new AIDS cases.<sup>2</sup>

## HIV/AIDS Disproportionately Impacts Latinos

- The Latino population is the second ethnic/racial minority group most highly impacted by HIV/AIDS in the United States (U.S.).

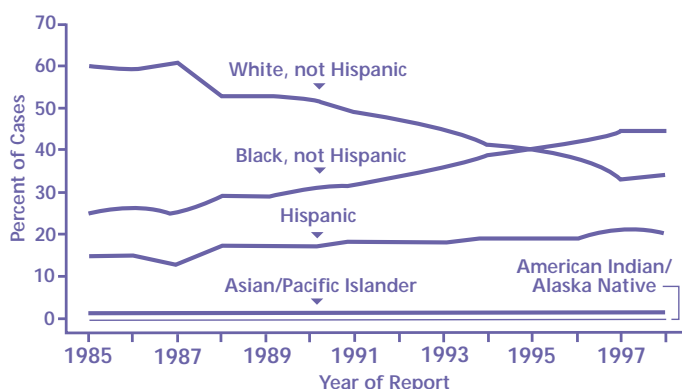


<sup>1</sup> Joint United Nations Program on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), "The UNAIDS Report, A Joint Response to AIDS in Action", Geneva, Switzerland: 1999, p.17.

<sup>2</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention HIV/AIDS Surveillance Report, Year-end edition, Vol. 10, No. 2, December 1998.

- The Latino population is also one of the fastest growing populations in the country. Between 1980 and 1990 the Latino population grew by 53%. By the year 2030 it is projected that Latinos will total 65.5 million and make up 19% of the U.S. population.<sup>3</sup>
- According to projections made by the Harvard School of Public Health, by the year 2005 the number of new AIDS cases among Latinos will surpass that of whites. Unabated, these trends portend disaster for the Latino population in the new millennium.

**Proportion of AIDS Cases, by Race/Ethnicity and Year of Report, 1985-1998, United States**



## Cumulative and New AIDS Cases

- Through December 1998, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reported 688,200 cumulative AIDS cases in the United States, its dependencies, possessions and associated nations. Of that total, Latinos accounted for 124,841 cases or 18% of the total AIDS cases reported through 1998.<sup>4</sup>
- In the same year a total of 48,266 new AIDS cases were reported in the U.S. Latinos accounted for 9,650 or 20% of these new AIDS cases yet accounted for only 13% of the total population.

- Latino men made up 20% of the new AIDS cases among males, Latina women represented 19% of the new AIDS cases reported among females, and Latino children made up 22% of the new AIDS cases among children in the U.S.

## AIDS Cases per 100,000 Population

- Latinos have the second highest AIDS case rate per 100,000 population among adults and adolescents (37.8) – approximately 3.8 times the rate among whites (9.9) in 1998.
- Latino males have an AIDS case rate of 58.2, over three and a quarter (3.27) times the rate for white males who have a rate of 17.8 per 100,000 population.
- Latino females have an AIDS case rate of 16.6, almost seven (6.9) times the rate for white females who have a rate of 2.4 per 100,000 population.
- The AIDS case rate among Latino children less than 13 years of age was 0.9 or 4.5 times the rate for white children (0.2) in the same year.<sup>5</sup>
- The rate of AIDS cases per 100,000 Latino population, reported by the CDC in 1998 is highest in the mid-Atlantic, Northeast and Southeast regions of the country.
- New York leads the nation with a rate of 137.3 per 100,000 Latino population, followed by Washington, DC (120.9), Connecticut (96.6), Pennsylvania (89.7), Massachusetts (85.9), Rhode Island (79.3), Delaware (62.5), Puerto Rico (58.3) and Florida (48.3).<sup>6</sup>

## AIDS Mortality

- The CDC reported a cumulative total of 410,800 deaths due to AIDS through December 1998 – approximately 60% of the total persons diagnosed with AIDS since the beginning of the epidemic.

<sup>3</sup> Collins, Karen Scott, and Hall, Allyson, Neuhaus, Charlotte, U.S. Minority Health: A Chartbook, The Commonwealth Fund, May 1999, p. 8.

<sup>4</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention HIV/AIDS Surveillance Report, Year-end edition, Vol. 10, No. 2, December 1998.

<sup>5</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention HIV/AIDS Surveillance Report, Year-end edition, Vol. 10, No. 2, December 1998.

<sup>6</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention HIV/AIDS Surveillance Report, Year-end edition, Vol. 10, No. 2, December 1998.

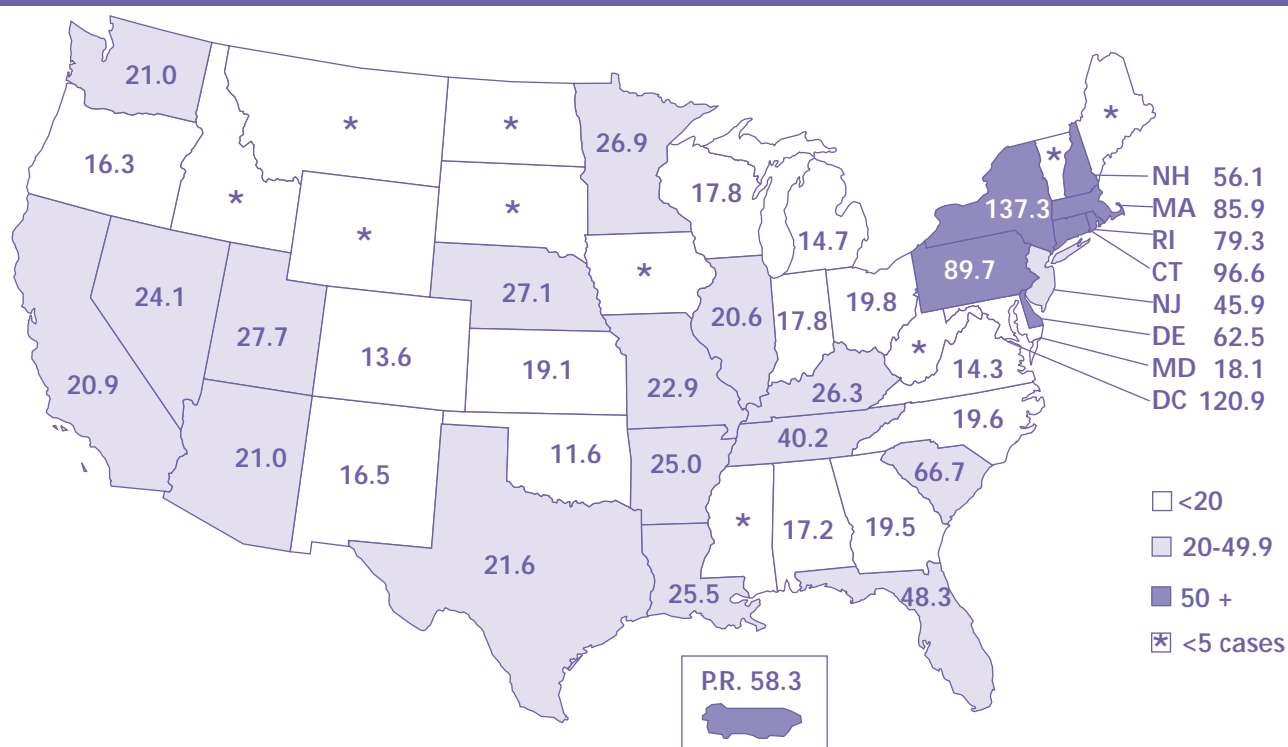
- Through December 1998, 70,934 deaths due to AIDS were reported among Latinos accounting for 17% of the total U.S. deaths and 57% of the 124,841 cumulative cases of AIDS reported among Latinos.
- In 1996, HIV/AIDS ranked as the second leading cause of death among Latino men and women age 25-44 years.
- Despite the advances in AIDS drug therapies that have led to dramatic drops in AIDS deaths since 1996, ethnic and racial minorities continue to lag behind whites. Between 1996 and 1997 the deaths due to AIDS dropped 45% overall compared to 54% for whites, 44% for Latinos and 38% for African Americans.<sup>7</sup>
- The latest trends indicate that the AIDS mortality rate is still declining but far more slowly. From 1997 to 1998, the AIDS death rates declined by 21% for Latinos compared to 20% overall, 22% for whites and 17% for African Americans.

- The rate of AIDS deaths per 100,000 population for Latinos was 3.7 times that of whites. Data reported by the CDC in August 1999 indicates that AIDS deaths per 100,000 population were 12.24 for Latinos compared to 3.32 for Whites and 32.46 for African Americans.

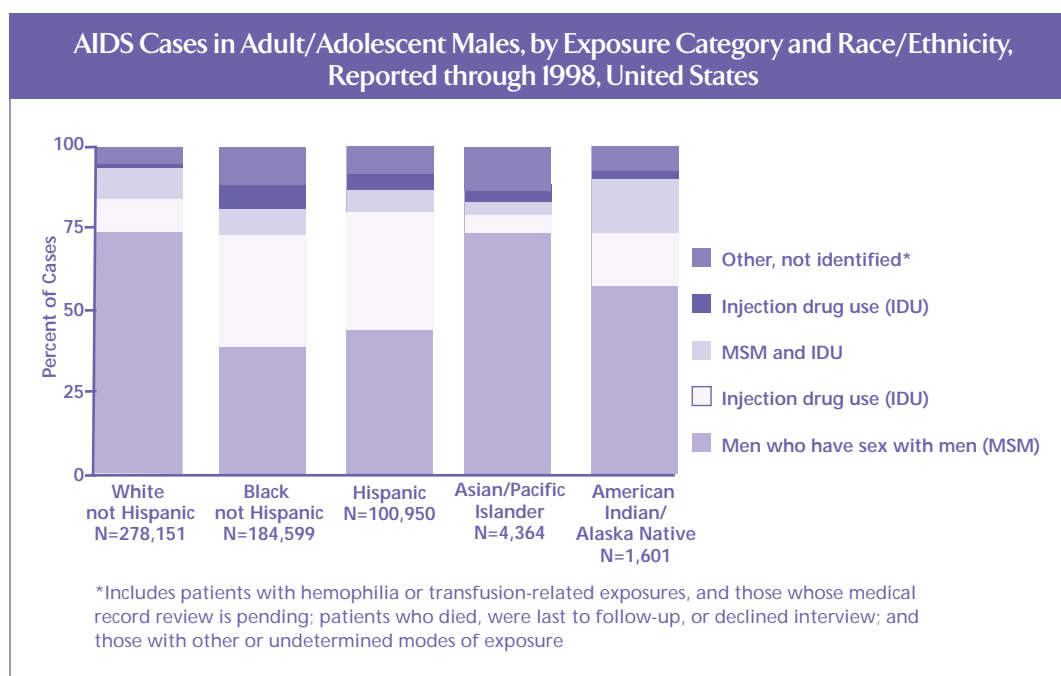
## Gender

- Latino males make up 82% of the cumulative adult/adolescent AIDS cases reported among Latinos, while females make up 18% of the cases.
- Males made up 78% and females made up 22% of the new adult/adolescent AIDS cases reported among Latinos in 1998. Among Latino males the leading exposure category for AIDS is men who have sex with men (43% of the cumulative cases and 36% of the new AIDS cases reported in 1998).

AIDS Rates per 10,000 Hispanic Population Reported in 1998



<sup>7</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention *HIV/AIDS Surveillance Report*, Year-end edition, Vol. 10, No. 2, December 1998.



## HIV/AIDS among Latinos (Males)

### Cumulative AIDS Cases

- In 1998, a cumulative total of 570,425 cases of AIDS among adolescent/adult males were reported in the U.S. Latinos accounted for 100,950 or 18% of the cumulative total.
- Of the cases among Latino men, 43% were attributed to men having sex men, 36% to injection drug use, 7% to sex with men who inject drugs, 5% through heterosexual contact and 8% due to risk not reported/identified.
- Of the cases of heterosexual contact, 31% were infections due to sex with an injecting drug using female and 68% were due to having sex with an HIV+ person whose risk was not reported/identified.
- Of these cases, 36% were due to men having sex with other men (MSM), 29% were due to injecting drug use (IDU), 4% were due to MSM and IDU, 8% were due to heterosexual transmission, and 21% of these cases were due to risk not reported/identified.
- Of the heterosexual transmission cases, 22% were due to sex with an injecting drug user, and 76% were due to having sex with an HIV+ person whose risk was not reported/identified.
- According to the CDC, over the last decade, transmission through MSM and IDU have accounted for roughly equal proportions of cases among Latino men, with the proportion among heterosexuals increasing, although the number of heterosexually transmitted cases is still relatively low.

### New AIDS Cases

- Of the 36,886 new AIDS cases reported among men in 1998, 20% (7,511) were among Latinos.
- AIDS incidence increased in all risk categories over the decade, although the rate of increase has been greatest for Latino men infected heterosexually.

### Cumulative HIV Cases

- In 1998, a cumulative total of 76,886 cases of HIV among adolescent/adult males were reported in the U.S. Latinos accounted for 5,391 or 7% of the cumulative total.
- Of the cases among Latino men, 37% were attributed to men having sex with men, 23% to injection drug use, 5% to sex with men who inject drugs, 6% through heterosexual contact and 28% due to risk not reported/identified.
- Of the cases of heterosexual contact, 29% were infections due to sex with an injecting drug user and 70% were due to having sex with an HIV+ person whose risk was not reported/identified.

### New HIV Cases

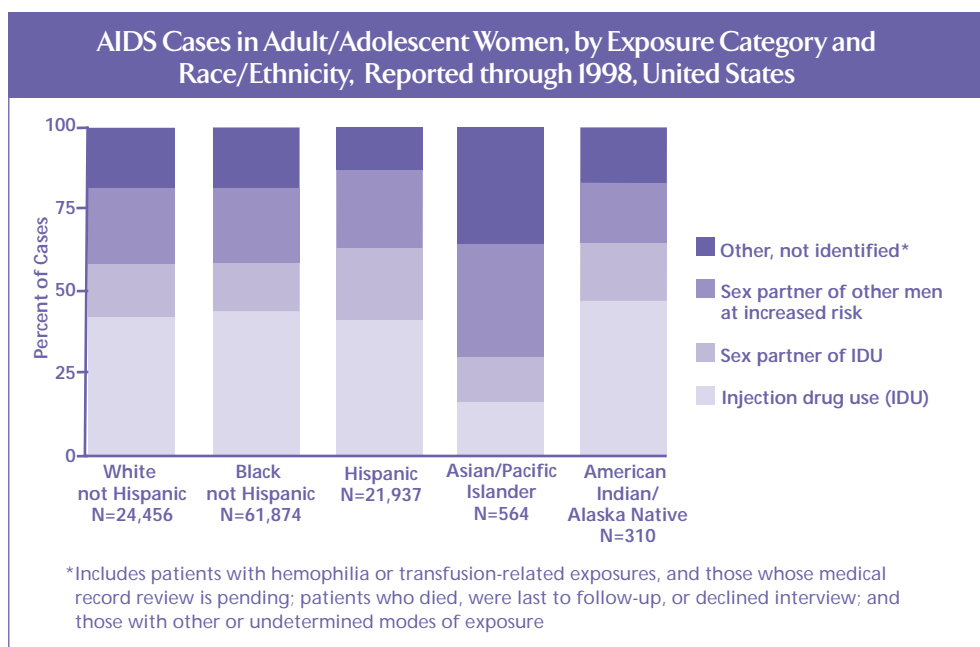
- Of the 13,031 new HIV cases reported among men in 1998, 11% (1,380) were among Latinos.
- Of these cases, 41% were due to men having sex with other men (MSM), 12% were due to injecting drug use (IDU), 3% were due to MSM and IDU, 6% were due to heterosexual transmission, and 39% of the cases were due to risk not identified.

- Of the heterosexual transmission cases, 17% were due to sex with an injecting drug user, and 81% were due to having sex with an HIV+ person whose risk was not reported/identified.<sup>8</sup>

### HIV/AIDS among Latinas (Females)

#### Cumulative AIDS Cases

- As of December 1998 a cumulative total of 109,311 adolescent/adult females have been diagnosed with AIDS in the U.S. Latinas made up 20% (21,927) of the cumulative number of AIDS cases reported among females.
- Of these cases, 41% were due to injecting drug use; 47% were due to heterosexual transmission and 10% were due to risk not reported/identified.
- Of the cases of heterosexual transmission, 48% were related to having sex with an injecting drug user, 5% were due to having sex with a bisexual man and 46% were due to having sex with an HIV+ person whose risk was not reported/identified.



<sup>8</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention *HIV/AIDS Surveillance Report*, Year-end edition, Vol. 10, No. 2, December 1998 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention *HIV/AIDS Surveillance Report*, Year-end edition, Vol. 10, No. 2, December 1998, Tables 9 and 10, pp.18-19.



### New AIDS Cases

- In 1998, there were a total of 10,998 cases of AIDS reported among adolescent/adult females in the U.S. Latinas made up 19% (2,055) of these cases.
- Approximately 28% of the AIDS cases reported among Latinas in 1998 were due to injecting drug use, 44% were due to heterosexual contact, and 27% were due to risk not reported/identified.
- Of the cases of heterosexual transmission, 30% were related to having sex with an injecting drug user, 4% were due to having sex with a bisexual man and 65% were due to having sex with an HIV+ person whose risk was not reported/identified.

### Cumulative HIV Cases

- In 1998, a cumulative total of 27,806 cases of HIV among adolescent/adult females were reported in the U.S. Latinas accounted for 1,790 or 6% of the cumulative total.
- Of the cases among Latinas, 23% were attributed to injection drug use 41% were through heterosexual contact and 34% were due to risk not reported/identified.
- Of the cases of heterosexual contact, 40% were infections due to sex with an injecting drug user, 4% were due to sex with a bisexual male and 55% were due to having sex with an HIV+ person whose risk was not reported/identified.

### New HIV Cases

- Of the 6,051 new HIV cases reported among women in 1998, 8% (461) were among Latinas.
- Of these cases, 12% were due to injecting drug use (IDU), 40% were due heterosexual transmission, and 48% of the cases were due to risk not reported/identified.
- Of the heterosexual transmission cases, 27% were due to sex with an injecting drug user, 4% were due to sex with a bisexual male and 67% were due to having sex with an HIV+ person whose risk was not reported/identified.<sup>9</sup>

## HIV/AIDS among Latino Children

### Cumulative AIDS Cases

- As of December 1998 a cumulative total of 8,461 among children less than 13 years of age have been diagnosed with AIDS in the U.S. Latinos made up 22% (1,954) of the cumulative number of AIDS cases reported among children.
- Of these cases, 92% were due to mother to child (perinatal) transmission, 2% were due to hemophilia/coagulation disorder, 5% were due to receipt of blood transfusion, blood components or tissues and 1% were due to risk not reported/identified.
- Of the cases of mother to child transmission, 40% were related to the mother's injecting drug use, and 27% were due to the mother having sex with an injecting drug user. An additional 2% were due to the mother having sex with a bisexual man, 14% were due to the mother having sex with an HIV+ person whose risk was not identified/reported and 15% were due to an HIV+ mother whose risk was not reported/identified.

### New AIDS Cases

- In 1998, there were a total of 382 cases of AIDS reported among children less than 13 years of age in the U.S. Latinos made up 22% (84) of these cases.
- Of these cases, 89% were due to mother to child (perinatal) transmission, and 10% were due to risk not reported/identified.
- Of the cases of mother to child transmission, 23% were related to the mother's injecting drug use, and 16% were due to the mother having sex with an injecting drug user. In addition, 24% were due to the mother having sex with an HIV+ person whose risk was not identified/reported, and 32% were due to an HIV+ mother whose risk was not reported/identified.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention *HIV/AIDS Surveillance Report*, Year-end edition, Vol. 10, No. 2, December 1998, Tables 11 and 12, pp. 20-21.

<sup>10</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention *HIV/AIDS Surveillance Report*, Year-end edition, Vol. 10, No. 2, December 1998, Tables 11 and 12, pp. 20-21. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention *HIV/AIDS Surveillance Report*, Year-end edition, Vol. 10, No. 2, December 1998, Tables 15 and 16, pp. 24-25.

### Cumulative HIV Cases

- In 1998, a cumulative total of 1,875 cases of HIV among children were reported in the U.S. Latinas accounted for 215 or 11% of the cumulative total.
- Of the cases among Latinos, 89% were due to mother to child (perinatal) transmission, 2% were due to hemophilia/coagulation disorder, 3% to receipt of blood transfusion, blood components or tissues and 6% were due to risk not reported/identified.
- Of the cases of mother to child transmission, 26% were related to the mother's injecting drug use, and 17% were due to the mother having sex with an injecting drug user. In addition, 23% were due to the mother having sex with an HIV+ person whose risk was not identified/reported, and 31% were due to an HIV+ mother whose risk was not reported/identified.

### New HIV Cases

- Of the 309 new HIV cases reported among children in 1998, 14% (43) were among Latinos.
- Of the cases among Latinos, 79% were due to mother to child (perinatal) transmission, 2% were due to hemophilia/coagulation disorder, 7% to receipt of blood transfusion, blood components or tissues and 12% were due to risk not reported/identified.
- Of the cases of mother to child transmission, 21% were related to the mother's injecting drug use, and 6% were due to the mother having sex with an injecting drug user. In addition, 32% were due to the mother having sex with an HIV+ person whose risk was not identified/reported, and 35% were due to an HIV+ mother whose risk was not reported/identified.

### HIV/AIDS among Latino Sub-populations

- An analysis of the 9,566 new AIDS cases among Latinos in 1998 by birth place indicates that Latinos born in the United States make up the greatest proportion of the cases

(29%), closely followed by those born in Puerto Rico who make up 27% of the cases.

- Latinos born in Mexico, account for 10% of the new AIDS cases, followed by those born in Central/South America (7%), and those born in Cuba (2%).
- Latinos born in other locations account for 2.2% of the new AIDS cases and 22% of the new AIDS cases are among Latinos whose place of birth is unknown.<sup>11</sup>
- An analysis of exposure category by birth place indicates that injecting drug use is the leading exposure category among Puerto Rican-born (46%) and the second leading risk category for U.S.-born (28%) Latinos.
- Men who have sex with men is the leading exposure category among Latinos born in Mexico (48%), U.S.-born (37%), Central/South America (36%) and Cuba (34%). Heterosexual contact accounts for 25% of the cases among Puerto Rican-born, 17% among Central/South American-born, 12% of the U.S.-born, 11% of the Mexican-born and 8% of the Cuban-born Latinos.
- An alarmingly high percentage of Latinos have no reported or identified risk: 47% Cuban-born; 40% Central/South American-born; 29% Mexican-born; 18% U.S.-born and 11% Puerto Rican-born Latinos.

### Migrant Farm Workers

- Migrant and mobile populations are among the most medically underserved populations. At least three quarters of the one to four million migrant farm workers in the United States at any given time are Latinos. Among migrant farm workers, HIV prevalence is estimated at between 3 and 13%.
- According to the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), mobility among migrant farm workers and the high percentage of multiple health problems they experience makes the delivery of consistent med-

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<sup>11</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention *HIV/AIDS Surveillance Report*, Year-end edition, Vol. 10, No. 2, December 1998.



ical care very difficult. Federally funded migrant and community health centers are the primary source of medical care for this population.<sup>12</sup>

## Current HIV Case Reporting May Under-count Latino Cases

HIV reporting does not provide a good indicator of the trends in the epidemic among Latinos for a variety of reasons:

- Currently 33 states and jurisdictions have confidential HIV reporting systems and report HIV infection cases to the CDC. Confidential HIV case reporting is based reporting cases by name.
- The six states that account for 70% of the Latino population, California, Texas, New York, Florida, New Jersey and Illinois also have a high incidence of HIV/AIDS. An additional 20 percent of the Latino population reside in Arizona, New Mexico, Colorado and Massachusetts. These ten states and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico make up 90% of the U.S. Latino AIDS cases.
- Of these states, currently Florida (since July 1997) and New Jersey (since January 1992) have confidential HIV infection reporting for adult and pediatric cases. Texas (since February 1994) has confidential HIV infection reporting for pediatric cases only. New York began the process of implementing their reporting system in 1999. California, Illinois and Puerto Rico do not have confidential HIV infection reporting.
- The data regarding the percentage of HIV infections among Latinos appears relatively low when one considers that Latinos make up 18% of the cumulative and 20% of the new AIDS cases reported in the U.S.
- HIV case reporting data must therefore be used with caution, particularly when it is used to justify service needs and funding allocations for HIV prevention and care service programs targeted to specific populations.

- Surrogate markers for HIV infection should also be used to project trends and to target funding, including data on the rates of infection from other sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), teen pregnancy, and trends in alcohol and substance use and abuse including the use of injection drugs, cocaine, and crack.

## Demographics of the Latino Population in the United States

- The U.S. has the fifth largest population of Latinos in the world, following Mexico, Spain, Argentina and Colombia.
- Latinos comprise 13% of the total population of the U.S., and account for 28.4 million people in the fifty states.
- Another 3.2 million reside in the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico. Puerto Ricans have been citizens of the United States since the First World War, by an act of Congress.
- The Latino population in the United States is very diverse, representing variations in national origin, immigration/migration patterns, historical backgrounds, language/dialects and cultural values and beliefs.
- Mexican Americans are the largest Latino sub-population representing 18 million or 57% of the Latino population in the U.S. Puerto Ricans are the second largest group, making up about 20% (6.3 million including residents of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico) of the Latino population.
- Central Americans account for 6%, of the Latino population. However among Central Americans, 43% were Salvadoran, 20% were Guatemalan and 15% were Nicaraguan.
- South Americans make up 5% of the U.S. Latino population. Of South Americans, 37% were Colombians, 19% were Ecuadorian, and 17% Peruvian.<sup>13</sup>
- Cuban Americans make up 1.1 million or 3.5% of the Latino population in the U.S.

<sup>12</sup> HRSA Care Action, April 1999, "Latinos Living with HIV Disease: Barriers to Care" HIV/AIDS Bureau, Health Resources and Services Administration, pp. 1-4.

<sup>13</sup> U.S. Department of Commerce, Economics and Statistics Administration, Bureau of the Census, *We the American...Hispanics*, September 1993, p.4.

## Immigration and High Fertility Rates Contribute to the Rapid Population Growth

- The rapid growth in the Latino population nationwide is attributed to both significant immigration, particularly since 1965, and high fertility rates.
- The Mexican population nearly doubled between 1970 and 1980 and between 1980 and 1990. The Cuban and Puerto Rican populations grew at a rate four times as fast as the rest of the nation.
- Other Latino sub-groups grew significantly between 1980 and 1990. This growth was partly due to the large number of Central and South American immigrants entering the U.S.<sup>14</sup>
- Latinos, on average, have larger families than either whites or African-Americans, although there are differences in family size among the major subgroups in the Latino population. Mexican-Americans, generally, have the largest families among Latinos, particularly in rural areas or small towns, followed in order by Puerto Ricans, Central Americans and Cubans.

## Latinos are Heavily Concentrated in the Southwest, Northeast and Southeast Regions of the U.S.

- Latinos tend to remain heavily concentrated in certain regions of the United States, notably the Southwest, the West, the Northeast, south Florida and several urban centers of the Midwest. In 1990, 9 of 10 Latinos lived in just 10 states and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico.
- Most Latinos lived in the western and southwestern states of California (34%), Texas (19%), Arizona (3%) and New Mexico (2%). In 1997, 40% of the residents of New Mexico, 31% of the residents of California and 29% of the residents of Texas were Latinos. Nearly 22% of the residents of Arizona, 15% of the residents of Nevada, and slightly over 14%, of the residents of Florida, Colorado and New York were Latino.<sup>15</sup>

## The Latino Population is also Dispersing to Many “Nontraditional” Areas of the Country

- Significant statewide growth of the Latino population is also occurring in other states. These include New Jersey (12%), Illinois (10%), Hawaii (8%), Connecticut (8%), Washington, DC (7.2%), Idaho (7%), Utah (6.5%), Massachusetts (6%), and Washington (6%).
- There are notable concentrations of Latinos in Oregon (5.9%), Rhode Island (5.9%), Wyoming (5.9%) Kansas (5.1%) Nebraska (4%) Pennsylvania (2.5%), Michigan (2.6%), Louisiana (2.6%), and Wisconsin (2.5%).<sup>16</sup>
- Several metropolitan areas account for a large percentage of the total Latino population. These include Los Angeles, and several other urban areas in California (San Diego, Riverside, San Bernardino, Ventura, the San Francisco Bay Area and Fresno), as well as New York City, Miami, Chicago, San Antonio, Phoenix, Denver, Houston, Dallas, El Paso, Albuquerque, Tampa, Kansas City, Tucson, Corpus Christi and Austin.<sup>17</sup>

### Age

- Latinos have a higher proportion of young adults and children and fewer elderly than the non-Latino population in the U.S. In 1990, close to 7 out of every 10 Latinos were younger than 35 years old compared to 5 out every 10 non-Latinos.
- Among the elderly, about 5% of Latinos were 65 years of age and over compared with 13% for non-Latinos.
- Approximately 40% of the Latino population were under 20 years old, compared with 28% of the non-Latino population. This is due to a relatively high fertility rate among recently immigrated Latinos.<sup>18</sup>

### Median Household Income and Poverty

- Latinos had a median family income of \$24,906 in 1997, compared to \$38,786 for whites.

<sup>14</sup> U.S. Department of Commerce, Economics and Statistics Administration, Bureau of the Census, *We the American...Hispanics*, September 1993, p.2.

<sup>15</sup> U.S. Bureau of the Census, “Estimates of the Population of States and Countries Ranked by Race and Hispanic Origin in 1997”, PPL-110, September 1998.

<sup>16</sup> U.S. Bureau of the Census, “Estimates of the Population of States and Countries Ranked by Race and Hispanic Origin in 1997”, PPL-110, September 1998.

<sup>17</sup> Rodriguez, Santiago, “Hispanics in the United States: An Insight Into Group Characteristics”, Hispanic Homepage, [www.dhhs.gov](http://www.dhhs.gov), July 1995.

<sup>18</sup> U.S. Department of Commerce, Economics and Statistics Administration, Bureau of the Census, *We the American—Hispanics*, September 1993, p. 4.

- Among Latino sub-groups, Central and South Americans had the highest median family income (\$28,580), followed by Cuban Americans (\$28,413).
- Mexican Americans (\$24,368) and Puerto Ricans (\$21,908) had the lowest median family incomes among Latinos.<sup>19</sup>
- In 1995, the poverty rate was 30.3% for Latinos compared to 8.5% for whites.
- While only 1 in every 10 persons in the U.S. is Latino, 2 in every 10 persons (23.5%) living in poverty were Latinos.

#### **Educational Attainment**

- Of 18 to 24 year olds, 59% of Latinos earned high school diplomas as compared to 82% of whites and 77% of African Americans.<sup>20</sup>
- Of Latinos 25 years and older, 7.4% of Latinos earned a bachelors degree or higher in 1997, compared to 17.5% of whites and 9.5% of African Americans.
- Among Latino sub-groups, 12.1% of Cuban Americans, 10.7% of Central and South Americans, 7.1% of Puerto Ricans and 5.7% of Mexican Americans earned a bachelors degree or higher.<sup>21</sup>

#### **Foreign Born**

- In 1996, over 10.8 million Latinos were foreign born, representing 38% of the Latino population. Of the 24.4 million foreign-born in the U.S. in 1996, 44.3% were Latinos (from Mexico, Central America, the Caribbean and South America).
- Nearly 75% of the Latino population in the U.S. were native born and naturalized citizens, compared with 97% of the non-Latino population. About 67% of Mexicans were born in the U.S., followed by 25% of South Americans and 21% of Central Americans. Among foreign-born Latinos in the U.S. in 1990 between 10% to 65% were non-citizens. Central Americans had the highest proportions of non-citizens.<sup>22</sup>

#### **Language**

- In addition, language, cultural values regarding health care utilization and educational level all play a role in access to care and up to date treatment information.
- A recent market survey indicates that 64% of Latino adults feel most comfortable speaking Spanish, 24% feel most comfortable speaking English and 12% feel comfortable speaking both Spanish and English.<sup>23</sup>
- According to the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) 68% of AIDS cases among Latinos reported in 1997 were among foreign-born individuals whose first language is Spanish.<sup>24</sup>

#### **Lack of Health Insurance**

- Latinos have the highest rates of uninsured of all ethnic and racial groups. In 1996 38% of Latinos compared to 24% of African Americans, 24% of Asian Americans and 14% of whites were uninsured.
- Latinos (44%) are less likely than whites (64%) to have employer sponsored insurance.
- Forty four percent of Latinos were not continuously insured during a two-year period compared to 20 percent of Whites.
- Of Latinos with incomes less than 100% of poverty, 52% were uninsured, and 31% were covered by Medicaid, compared to 39% uninsured and 27% covered by Medicaid for whites.
- Fifty six percent of Latinos between 100-124% of poverty (near poor) were uninsured compared to 35% of whites.
- Almost half (44%) of non-citizen adults ages 18 to 64 were uninsured in 1996 compared to 16% of the U.S.-born population.

<sup>19</sup> U.S. Bureau of the Census, "The Hispanic Population in the United States: March 1997" Current Population Reports, PPL-105, August 1998.

<sup>20</sup> U.S. Bureau of the Census, "Population Profile of the United States: March 1997" Current Population Reports, pp. 23-194, August 1998.

<sup>21</sup> U.S. Bureau of the Census, "The Hispanic Population in the United States: March 1997" Current Population Reports, PPL-105, August 1998.

<sup>22</sup> U.S. Bureau of the Census, "Population Profile of the United States: March 1997" Current Population Reports, p.45, August 1998.

<sup>23</sup> Strategy Research Corporation, 1998 U.S. Hispanic Market.

<sup>24</sup> HRSA Care Action, April 1999, "Latinos Living with HIV Disease: Barriers to Care" HIV/AIDS Bureau, Health Resources and Services Administration, pp. 1-4.

- Among adult full time workers, 37% of Latinos compared to 12% of whites are uninsured. Nearly two-thirds (65%) of privately insured Latinos were enrolled in managed care in 1997.

### Under-representation in the Health Professions

- Latinos are under-represented in the health professions. In 1990 African Americans, Latinos and Native Americans together made up 7% of the U.S. physicians.
- Latino (24%), Asian (30%) and African American (45%), physicians are more likely to care for a large share of Medicaid patients.
- Latino physicians (9%) are more likely than any other group to care for the uninsured.
- Latino (24%) and African American (16%) primary care physicians are more likely to work in hospital-based clinics than other physicians are.
- Latinos are under-represented as faculty in medical schools. In 1997 0.4% Mexicans, 0.8% Puerto Ricans and 1.8% other Latinos were faculty in U.S. medical schools. Of the Puerto Rican faculty, 53% were at three medical schools in Puerto Rico.
- In 1997 only 2.8% of medical school graduates were Puerto Rican and Mexican and 3.2% were other Latinos compared to 68.2% for whites.
- Latinos are also grossly under-represented in the nursing profession. In 1996, Latinos made up less than 2% of the total registered nurse population. Together, African Americans, Latinos and Native Americans make up 14% of the registered nurses in the country.<sup>25</sup>
- The under-representation of Latinos in the health professions has a serious impact on access to care for Latinos, particularly since Latinos comprise such a high proportion of the uninsured and Latino physicians are more likely to provide care to the uninsured.

### Barriers to HIV Prevention and Care Services for Latinos

#### Prevention

- To curb the spread of HIV infection among Latinos HIV prevention must be a top priority. Targeted culturally and linguistically appropriate prevention interventions are sorely needed. To make an impact, these interventions must be on-going and sustained, and must consider the social, economic, cultural, religious, spiritual, and migrant/immigration contexts in which the diverse populations of Latinos live.
- HIV prevention efforts must take into consideration the rapid population growth and the diversity of national origin and culture among Latinos in the U.S.
- Latinos continue to be underrepresented in the HIV prevention community planning process. In a March 1998 report on the progress of Prevention Community Planning, the CDC indicated that Latinos represent 12% of the total 1,064 members of community planning groups nationwide.
- To achieve true parity inclusion and representation in the prevention community planning process, CDC must take steps to ensure that the number and the meaningful participation of Latinos on these groups be increased significantly.
- According to the CDC, the level of program support currently directed to racial and ethnic minority communities, injecting drug user (IDUs) populations, men who have sex with men (MSM), and HIV infected individuals is substantially less than what the current epidemiological trends indicate is necessary.
- An unreleased analysis of FY 1999 CDC HIV/AIDS budget by race and ethnicity indicates that about 9.9% (\$35 million) of \$353 million is targeted specifically to Latinos.
- Anecdotal information from Latino organizations providing prevention services indicates that Latino organizations are under-funded and may not be receiving the level of prevention funding needed to do the job in their local communities.

<sup>25</sup> Collins, Karen, Scott, Hall, Allyson, Neuhaus, Charlotte, and U.S. Minority Health: A Chartbook, The Commonwealth Fund, May 1999.

- Individuals with HIV are excludable from the U.S. under immigration laws (unless a waiver is granted), thus many Latino immigrants are deterred from seeking information about their HIV status or accessing HIV prevention programs.
- HIV case reporting underestimates the number of Latinos with HIV and therefore does not provide a good indicator of the trends in the epidemic among Latinos.

#### HIV Care

- A variety of factors contribute to the disparities in AIDS incidence and mortality experienced by Latinos. These include late identification of HIV infection; less access to experienced HIV/AIDS physicians, less access to HIV therapy that meets the Public Health Service Guidelines and lack of health insurance to cover HIV care and medications.
- Recently published results of a survey of a national sample of HIV infected adults in the United States, concluded that African Americans, Latinos, women, the uninsured and Medicaid insured all had the least favorable patterns of HIV care. Women were among the groups that fared worst on most measures of care. The least desirable patterns of care experienced by women were related to race/ethnicity and insurance coverage.<sup>26</sup>
- The 1996 welfare and immigration laws restricted the eligibility of immigrants for many health and social services; these legal barriers limit the accessibility of health services for Latino immigrants living with HIV.

#### Recommendations

- Increase HIV/AIDS prevention and care resources specifically targeted to Latino populations and communities, and indigenous community based organizations and institutions. Funds should be allocated to support the following initiatives.
- A large scale, culturally appropriate, public information and education campaign targeted to Latinos sub-populations tailored by region and national origin, to educate

people about the benefits of knowing their HIV status; to promote HIV counseling, and voluntary HIV testing; and to promote voluntary partner counseling, notification and referral services. Resources should also be made available to insure that anonymous HIV testing sites are available and accessible. The overall goals of this campaign are to reduce further transmission of HIV/AIDS and to promote early intervention and treatment for those who have already contracted the virus.

- A national initiative to reduce HIV infection among gay Latino men funded by CDC which will incorporate the elements of HIV/AIDS risk reduction that have proven effective among gay Latino men. This initiative should include direct funding to Latino organizations with a history of service to gay men and emerging, indigenous organizations that are serving Latino gay men.
- Direct CDC funding to target additional resources to Latino community based organizations (CBOs) for HIV prevention services targeted to highly impacted and emerging Latino sub-populations including youth, women, injecting drug users and immigrant and migrant populations.
- Strengthen prevention capacity in Latino communities, though the CDC's Directly Funded Minority and Other CBOs Program, and the National/Regional Minority Organizations Program. There should also be an infusion of funding for the Communities of Color Initiative with the necessary funds to carry out a targeted and tailored, Latino Prevention Initiative.
- Increase Health Resources and Service Administration (HRSA) spending to develop, and expand the initiatives aimed at training Latino health professionals on the state-of-the-art HIV treatment and care. Funds provided to HRSA should also be directed towards the development and implementation of a plan to increase the number of Latino health professionals who specialize in HIV/AIDS and primary care in medically underserved urban and rural minority communities, and in the migrant and community health centers.

<sup>26</sup> Shapiro, M.E., et al, "Variations in the Care of HIV-Infected Adults in the United States: Results from the HIV Cost and Services Utilization Study" Journal of the American Medical Association, June 23/30, 1999, -Vol.281. No. 24, pp. 2305-2315.

- Provide direct funding from HRSA to Latino community based organizations to develop and implement Spanish language and bilingual comprehensive outreach and treatment education programs targeted to Latinos. The overall goal is to increase HIV/AIDS treatment knowledge and the benefits of knowing one's HIV status early, to support individual decision-making on treatment options and support treatment adherence for persons on antiretroviral therapies.
- Provide direct funding from Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) to Latino community based programs to provide intensive outreach, education and HIV counseling and voluntary testing, and direct linkage to care for Latino injecting drug users.
- Provide funding from SAMHSA to increase the availability of drug treatment slots for Latinos (monolingual and bilingual persons) in high incidence areas where substance abuse treatment is in high demand and low supply. Funding should also be expanded to support programs that provide comprehensive, culturally competent woman focused substance abuse treatment (for women and their children), and that integrate HIV prevention and primary HIV health care into drug prevention and treatment services.



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